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DE RUEHLP #1775/01 1791953  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 281953Z JUN 06  
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9801  
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 5965  
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 3283  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 7132  
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 4389  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1672  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LA PAZ 001775

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STATE FOR WHA/AND L.PETRONI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/17/2016

TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BL](#)

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION GOALS FOR THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Classified By: Amb. David N. Greenlee for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: The two leading opposition political parties, Podemos and the National Unity (UN) party, have had little success in educating voters about their respective campaign platforms. While Podemos has a solid plan for the Constituent Assembly, its repeated criticism of Venezuelan interference has overshadowed its plan and polarized voters. As in December, the UN has attempted to paint itself as the centrist alternative to the leftist Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) and the right-leaning Podemos, but its central theme of job creation leads many to wonder if the UN understands the point of the Constituent Assembly. It seems obvious that the opposition should work together to slow MAS momentum, but even after their spectacular December defeat, they have not learned that they can achieve more together than separately. End summary.

12. (C) The two leading opposition political parties, Podemos and the National Unity (UN) party, have had little success in educating voters about their respective campaign platforms. With just days left of the official campaign, voter apathy remains high. Bolivians are not familiar with candidates in their districts, the parties' platforms, or even the general purpose of the Constituent Assembly.

13. (C) While Podemos has a solid campaign platform for the Assembly, its repeated criticism of Venezuelan interference has overshadowed its plan and polarized the electorate. The main pillars of the Podemos campaign are autonomy and decentralization; a new political model shifting power to the people; a new, state-directed economic model which incorporates social justice; de-politicization of the justice system; and equality/non-discrimination. Podemos proposes several important political changes within this framework, such as creating a council (comprised of judges, civil society, and Congress) to select judges instead of Congress, and moving toward a parliamentary system in which the "Chief of Cabinet" (designated by the president and ratified by Congress) would coordinate relations between the two branches of government. Podemos also advocates creating mechanisms to remove the president and dissolve Congress in favor of new

general elections. Finally, Podemos proposes changing the current composition of the lower house from 130 deputies (70 uninominal, 60 plurinominal) to 100 deputies chosen by district.

¶4. (C) Instead of campaigning on its platform, Podemos has made Venezuelan interference the central theme of this electoral contest. Podemos candidates have highlighted Chavez's involvement in the MAS campaign, the Assembly, the GOB's program to issue identity documents to Bolivians, hydrocarbons and Bolivia's foreign relations. Podemos leader Jorge "Tuto" Quiroga has also criticized the MAS for its use of state resources to campaign and for inciting conflict. While some applaud Podemos' efforts to bring Venezuela's activities in Bolivia to voters' attention, Quiroga's repeated criticism of Chavez and Venezuelan aid has polarized voters, as most Bolivians view such assistance in a highly positive light.

¶5. (C) The UN, in turn, has attempted to paint itself as the centrist alternative to the leftist Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) and the right-leaning Podemos, as it did in December. Its central theme of job creation, however, leads many to wonder if the UN understands that the point of the Constituent Assembly is to write a new constitution. The UN's objectives for the Assembly are to generate prosperity and employment; promote industrialization of natural resources; create a new modern, protective state; eradicate corruption; and provide justice for all. Key proposals to support these goals include strengthening an independent judiciary and creating a new state entity to guarantee transparent elections and defense of the people (by consolidating the National Electoral Court, human rights

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ombudsman, attorney general, and public ministry). The UN also favors a plebiscite to revoke the executive's power and call new elections within six months.

¶6. (C) Comment: Given the weakness of the individual opposition parties, it seems obvious that they should work together to slow MAS momentum. Instead, opposition parties continue to attack each other publicly and have little, if any, coordination. Even after their spectacular December defeat, the opposition has not learned that it can achieve more together than separately. End comment.  
GREENLEE